



## *Appreciate the Value of Play*

***Play and exploration are the natural ways your child learns and are critical for healthy development. Even when children misbehave, they are probably trying to learn something.***

### **Tips**

- Make sure your children have enough time for play—at least an hour a day is suggested.
- Teach your children to experience beauty through their senses
- Use natural materials found around the house or neighborhood.
- Model creative and spontaneous play.
- Resist the urge to direct or take over a child's activity.
- Make sure that your children's schedules are not overloaded with too many "enrichment" activities
- Pick outside activities that stress positive values and fun-filled learning over inappropriate competition.

### **Activities**

- Take a walk with no time limit so your child can explore a leaf or anthill or ANYTHING!
- Cover a card table with old sheets and let children play house.
- Give children a bag of old clothes for make-believe.
- Play follow the leader.
- Collect "junk" on a walk and make it into artwork.
- Redirect unsafe exploration—if your children tear books, give them old newspapers to tear.
- Keep a "surprise" activity box for rainy days.
- Turn off the television set and send your children out to play.
- Keep your children occupied while you shop by having them sort the objects in your grocery cart.
- Have your children imitate adult activities: while you cook, give your child modeling clay, cookie cutters, rolling pins, and dull silverware. When you do chores, give your child something to hammer, cut, dig in, rake, sweep, or dust. Let your child work alongside you.
- Have children's books available when you sit down with the morning newspaper, so your child can "read" at the same time.